

THE SURRENDER OF HARPER'S FERRY.

The Inside History—Substance of Official Telegrams—Gen. Wool and McClellan in History.

From Our Own Correspondent.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 1, 1862.

Now that the Military Commission has finished taking testimony in regard to the surrender of Harper's Ferry, it can do no public injury to allow some of the facts with regard to that transaction to be known.

From the statements of officers summoned to give evidence before that Commission, and from other sources, we have collected the following, which we think will be found the fullest history yet given of this entire transaction:

Early in September it appears that Gen. Wool received a strong suggestion from the War Department to the effect that Harper's Ferry proper was regarded as an indefensible point, and that the troops should be withdrawn from its occupation and concentrated upon Maryland Heights for its defense. These orders were peremptory to the extent of strongly advising the measure, although leaving to Gen. Wool, as commanding officer of the department, the courtesy of discretion, as to refusing to obey in case he felt convinced that the alarm of the War Department was groundless. It should, perhaps, also be added that the War Department had ordered Gen. White to that neighbourhood, doubtless with the intention that he should take command at the Ferry, he being the senior officer at that point.

This intention, however, was counteracted by the order of Maj.-Gen. Wool, that Gen. White should leave the greater part of his forces at Harper's Ferry, under command of Col. Dixon H. Miles, and himself proceed to Martinsburg with a small portion of his force—the greater part being left under Col. Miles at Harper's Ferry. Against this arrangement Gen. White protested, but without avail—Gen. Wool taking the responsibility of considering Harper's Ferry defensible, and retaining the troops there in its occupation.

The day after the army of Gen. McClellan left Washington on its march to drive Lee out of Maryland, the War Department notified Col. Miles that Gen. McClellan was marching to his relief, and would be up in abundant time to reinforce and protect his post, and that under all circumstances the post was to be held to the latest moment. This dispatch, as we have heard from officers of Col. Miles's staff, was couched in the strongest terms, and assured Col. Miles, who appeared fearful that the Government had condemned him in advance for his part in the disaster of Bull Run, that the Department was now kindly disposed toward him, and would give him the utmost credit in any defense that he should be able to make. To this Col. Miles replied, thanking the War Department for its confidence, and giving assurance that the place should be held to the uttermost. He also added that the enemy was then advancing upon him from Winchester. Three days later, he reports himself ready to repel an attack, although made by 20,000 men, but adds that he does not expect to be attacked, and it may have been this assurance which lulled Gen. Wool into the false security which prevented his obedience to the orders of the War Department.

On the 14th of September Gen. McClellan whose headquarters were then at Rockville, wrote to the War Department asking that the (10,000) ten thousand men then under the command of Col. Miles at Harper's Ferry should be ordered to join him immediately, and thus help to swell the force of the army of the Potomac. If besieged they were useless where they then were and in danger, but by joining them they might save themselves and make his victory more secure. To this the obvious answer was, that, as from his statement if the garrison was besieged, the only way by which the junction desired could be effected, would be for Gen. McClellan to cut his way through the besieging forces and effect a junction with Col. Miles. It being added as a master of course that the moment this junction was effected Col. Miles, from the necessities of war, would be transferred from the Department of Gen. Wool and placed under Gen. McClellan's command.

These suggestions were earnestly referred to Gen. McClellan, and Col. Miles received instructions to obey all orders from Gen. McClellan, with notification that Gen. McClellan was marching to his relief, and with instructions to do his best to co-operate with the relieving army, and force a passage through the besieged lines, to join McClellan on the line of the Monocacy.

On the 14th of September Gen. McClellan sent a report to the Secretary of War that Col. Miles was then only besieged, and in serious danger, but that in McClellan's judgment he could yet hold out for two days, and a promise was given in the most energetic form to relieve him if they held out even for one day. Gen. McClellan's army then being mainly at Frederick, and said to be moving toward and to the relief of the Ferry. That Gen. McClellan was fully aware, or should have been aware, of the critical situation of Harper's Ferry, is proved by the fact that this same communication announced that while Col. Miles still retained possession of Harper's Ferry and London Heights, the enemy possessed Maryland Heights, a position from which their canon completely enveloped the troops in the Ferry and against which the fortifications erected on London Heights were absolutely useless. On the 15th of September Col. A. Vose of the 12th Illinois Cavalry, who had succeeded the night before in escaping from Harper's Ferry—which appears to have been very imperfectly besieged, and with full communications open to the rear—reports from Pennsylvania that, when he left Harper's Ferry, Col. Miles had been in hourly expectation of receiving the promised reinforcements, and that on the day previous, as his way to Pennsylvania, he had heard furious skirmishing all day long. On the same day, the War Department telegraphed this report of Col. Vose to Gen. McClellan, urging, in the strongest manner, that reinforcements to the Ferry be sent at once, as it was known that the enemy had planted cañon on Maryland Heights, and announcing that large reinforcements had been sent forward to the Army of the Potomac, which would more than replace any column that might be detached for the relief of Col. Miles's command.

The result is known. On the 16th of September Gen. White, who had, in deference to Gen. Wool's express and repeated instructions, waived his authority and refused to take command at Harper's Ferry, sent a report to the War Department that the place with all its defenders had surrendered, their ammunition being exhausted, with various other excuses.

The point of striking interest collateral to the foregoing narrative is, that the Army of the Potomac, knowing that Harper's Ferry was besieged and in danger, and that it was to a great extent the key of the possible retreat of the Rebels down the Virginia Valley, advances to its relief at a daily rate of marching averaging less than six miles per day, and that although from the 11th Inst. Harper's Ferry was then one day's march to columns abundantly competent to its relief, no single effort, direct or indirect, looking toward that end was made by the Army of the Potomac. Had Harper's Ferry been in our possession when the battle of Antietam was fought, the result could not have been widely different, and most disastrous to the Rebels.

The key to the only available line of retreat for Gen. Lee would have been in the hands of the Union

forces; and the columns of Jackson, with the immense prestige belonging to it, would have been withheld from the conflict.

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NORTH-WESTERN ARKANSAS.**Operations of the Army of the Frontier—Movements of the Various Forces.**

From Our Special Correspondent.

HEADQUARTERS GEN. HERREN'S DIVISION, CROSS HOLLOW, ARK., Oct. 24, 1862.

The operations of the "Army of the Frontier" are attracting considerable attention, on account of the important results to be accomplished by it during the coming winter campaign. The army in South-West Missouri and North-Western Arkansas is commanded by Brig.-Gen. Schofield, and consists of about 25,000 men, over one-third of which number is cavalry. Gen. Curtis, who commands this Department, has given this body of men the well-sounding title of the "Army of the Frontier." It is divided into three divisions, commanded respectively as follows: by Gens. Blunt, Totten, and Harren. There are not less than fifty pieces of field artillery of a character and caliber suitable for this hilly, mountainous country. The force may be considered, with some exceptions, to be very effective. Gen. Blunt has some 4,000 Indians in his command, and one aborigine is not worth "five Yankees" or any other man. The Missouri State Militia are also not above reprobation when it comes to an estimate of soldierly value. They are about 10,000 men raised under some special act of the State Legislature as a sort of Home Guard. For those who wish to do so, this law can be construed to keep them from crossing the State line, though the intention of the representatives clearly was for these men to pursue and destroy all the enemies of Missouri wherever they were to be found when it was plain they threatened her borders. This little tactic has already caused trouble, and upon several instances revolted. Some of them refused to cross the lines a few weeks ago, whereupon their General, trained two pieces of artillery upon them, and absolutely forced them to do so. Their brief compliance amounted to nothing, for upon the first opportunity they escaped into their own State again.

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At Newtonton, upon the occasion of the unfortunate attack of our forces on treble their number, which it would be well enough perhaps to recruit. The fight was a fierce one while it lasted, and one of the officers became very thirsty. He repaired to a spring in the forest near by to get a draught of cool water, and, kneeling down, drank from the fountain itself, without aid of cup. As he arose from this refreshment, he had at himself fair and square upon his own head, which were armed with a pair of tremendous Mexican spurs. The instant he felt the prick of the sharp spurs, he thought the enemy were upon him, and a bayonet entering his flesh. When some of his men arrived, he was bawling, "O, I surrender! I surrender!" at the top of his voice. The Articles of War do not admit of my stating his name.

Yours, respectfully, FRED.

this locality has been highly beneficial to Uncle Sam, and productive of excellent results. No rebels can be heard of now nearer than fifteen miles, and they are still going toward Dixie. If they do not stop soon and give us another battle, our Generals here will be obliged to sit down and mark out another campaign, with the Arkansas River for a base of operations.

No great and bloody engagement has taken place this Fall, though there are forces enough in this vicinity to exact another battle as sanguinary as that of Pea Ridge. An encounter is imminent, and may transpire within the next 48 hours. Gen. Herron is perfectly acquainted with all this country, and in his well-known skill and experience there are great grounds for confidence as to the ultimate result here. The movements of the armies of the West are made with greater celerity than elsewhere, and events may be crowded into a few hours here that it takes as many weeks to consummate in other places. There is no time spent in starving out the Rebels or building fortifications, but everything is accomplished by rapid rough-and-tumble hard-fisted fighting and dashing bravery.

We sublant on the enemy, and make no scruples in converting any property that may be found lying around loose to Uncle Sam's use. We have Seesah mites at work grinding Seesah wheat, and our horses are fattening on the best of Seesah corn, oats, and hay. Seesah cattle, sheep, and hogs, contribute materially to the strength of muscle of our brave boys, and don't cost "U. S." a "red." The interesting contraband has become very scarce hereabout, not one of the male gender having been seen by us for a long time, excepting those, of course, in our own camp, of whom one regiment has nearly 130 employed. They have either fled or been removed by their owners further South. I noticed the other day, in passing through Blunt's Division, that scores of the best-looking Indians had remarkably curly hair—in fact, it was wool and nothing else. A mulatto makes a very good Cherokee, with the aid of a dab of wax paint and a few feathers. The question of naming negroes has been settled here for a long time.

An amusing little incident occurred the other day at Newtonton, upon the occasion of the unfortunate attack of our forces on treble their number, which it would be well enough perhaps to recruit. The fight was a fierce one while it lasted, and one of the officers became very thirsty. He repaired to a spring in the forest near by to get a draught of cool water, and, kneeling down, drank from the fountain itself, without aid of cup. As he arose from this refreshment, he had at himself fair and square upon his own head, which were armed with a pair of tremendous Mexican spurs. The instant he felt the prick of the sharp spurs, he thought the enemy were upon him, and a bayonet entering his flesh. When some of his men arrived, he was bawling, "O, I surrender! I surrender!" at the top of his voice. The Articles of War do not admit of my stating his name.

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FROM MISSOURI.**A Hard Ride, and Sharp Fight between Union Troops under Maj. E. J. White and Porter's Guerrillas—Maj. White at One Time Surrounded, and Fighting Single-Handed—The Guerrillas Rout with a Loss of 8 Killed and 20 Wounded.**

Correspondence of the N. Y. Tribune.

Sr. Louis, Oct. 24, 1862.

Here, in the vicinity of our Western frontier, every day has its military sensation—some appearance of armed and organized Rebels—a guerrilla party—a town or settlement plundered—or a dash of Union volunteers or Missouri State forces scattering a Rebel horde among the fastnesses of the wilderness.

We had lately an exploit of this character in which one of our young New-Yorkers, Major Frank J. White, bore a prominent part. Porter, the notorious guerrilla chief, was said to be in motion southward. Major White started in pursuit from Jefferson City with detachments drawn from two companies of Missouri State cavalry, a squadron of unmounted mounted militia recruits, and two mountain howitzers. He was gone 13 days, during which time he and his command rode 510 miles through woods and wilderness, at times 24, 26, and 32 hours without food or rest—but having the satisfaction at last of coming up with and routing the guerrilla marauders to some purpose.

Since the 1st call of the President for 75,000 men, Connecticut has sent into the field eight regiments of volunteers, one light battery, and a company of naval volunteers, 100 men, all well equipped, and in good fighting trim.

There are now in camp, within the State, five regiments which, with the recruits for the 1st and 3d regiments, make 1,000 men, all well equipped, and in good fighting trim.

Major White is 44 years old, leaving a deficiency of only 12 men, which will immediately be filled, bringing one-half of the 1st, making her full quota of volunteers. With these two regiments, Connecticut has put into the field a force of 1,000 men, thoroughly equipped, and well mounted, amounting to 1,000 men.

Since July 1, Connecticut has sent 100 men, all well equipped, and in good fighting trim, to the following battalions: Antietam, 1st, 12th, 13th, and 14th Regiments; Cedar Mountain, 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th Regiments; and Little Rock, 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th Regiments.

Connecticut regiments are at present located as follows: 1st Connecticut Heavy Artillery, the Root O. Tyler, is occupying the village of Washington, in Marion County; 2d Connecticut, at Danbury, 3d Connecticut, at New Haven, 4th Connecticut, at Stamford, 5th Connecticut, at New Haven, 6th Connecticut, at New Haven, 7th Connecticut, at New Haven, 8th Connecticut, at New Haven, 9th Connecticut, at New Haven, 10th Connecticut, at New Haven, 11th Connecticut, at New Haven, 12th Connecticut, at New Haven, 13th Connecticut, at New Haven, 14th Connecticut, at New Haven.

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